NOV. 24-26, 2005

Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association

Executive Notes

Your Provincial Executive Council met in St. John's on **November 24** and Joint Council (Branch Presidents and Provincial Executive) met on **November 25 and 26**. This issue of *Executive Notes* is a summary of major discussions and decisions that occurred at these meetings.

For further information contact any member of Provincial Executive or the staff person as indicated.

Opening Proposals

Provincial Executive devoted a great deal of time to reviewing all articles of the opening proposals for the current round of collective bargaining. A detailed presentation and discussion took place in preparation for the Joint Council meeting. A further discussion on the opening proposals is contained under the Joint Council section in this issue of *Executive Notes*. Further updates through *Bargaining Briefs* will keep members informed during the negotiation process.

For further information contact Sean Noah, Vice-President, or Lloyd Hobbs, Assistant Executive Director.

President's Report

The President reported to Provincial Executive on his activities since the last meeting. He has continued visiting schools as frequently as possible and is continuing with his efforts to provide teachers with a break from lunch-time supervision duty by taking over this duty for them during his visits. He has attended numerous meetings and appointments in his capacity as President and has been vocal in the media on teacher issues.

For further information contact Kevin Foley, President.

Alliance for Control of Tobacco

A presentation was made to Provincial Executive by Kevin Coady, Executive Director of the Newfoundland and Labrador Alliance for the Control of Tobacco (ACT) on the issue of smoke-free schoolyards. Mr. Coady updated Provincial Executive on its work in the area of banning smoking in schoolyards and the current media campaign targeted at junior and senior high school students.

For further information contact Kevin Foley, President, or Lesley-Ann Browne, Communications Officer.

Standing Committees

Professional Issues Committee

The NLTA will recommend to the Canadian Teachers' Federation that Fred Wood be a participant in Project Overseas for 2006.

For further information contact Lily Cole, Chair, Professional Issues Committee, or Beverley Park or René Wicks, Professional Development Division.

Communications/Political Action

- The opening ceremonies for Education Week 2006 will be held in the Burin/Marystown area.

For further information contact Jackie Maloney, Chair, Communications/Political Action Committee, or Lesley-Ann Browne, Communications Officer.

Table Officers

The schedule of Executive meetings for 2006-07 were approved as follows:

- 2006: September 22-23; November 23 (November 24 and 25 for Joint Council)
- 2007: February 23-24; April 10 (Pre-BGM Meeting); April 13 (Post-BGM Meeting); June 8-9

For further information contact Kevin Foley, President, or Edward Hancock, Executive Director.

Other Business

Staff members from the Benefits and Economic Services Division and the Professional Development Division will meet with representatives of the Eastern School District to discuss teachers' concerns with the district's draft assessment policy.

For further information contact Kevin Foley, President, or Lloyd Hobbs, Assistant Executive Director.

JOINT COUNCIL

Association Priorities

The Association priorities for 2005-07 were presented to Joint Council. The NLTA administrative staff provided Provincial Executive and Branch Presidents with the goals and indicators for each priority.

The three priority areas for 2005-07 are: quality of teacher work life/contract negotiations; membership awareness; and professionalism/accountability.

The goals for the priority of quality of teacher work life/contract negotiations are:

- negotiate improvements in the collective agreement to enhance teacher benefits and the quality of teacher work life;
- liaise with government agencies and other educational stakeholders to ensure that teachers have necessary resources and supports for teaching and learning;
- foster a proactive approach to teacher wellness;
- increase public support for teacher work life concerns through external imaging/public relations.

The goals of the membership awareness priority are:

- improve awareness among the membership of NLTA services, programs, initiatives and activity on educational issues;
- improve contact with early career teachers;
- complete the reorganization of special interest councils to make them more effective mechanisms for teacher professional development and awareness of curricular issues.

The goals of the professionalism/accountability priority are:

- review and renew our educational partnerships among the various groups which have a responsibility for and an interest in supporting teachers and the teaching profession;

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- action the recommendations of the NLTA Paper on Teacher Certification and the Provincial Certification Committee's agreement in principle on the expanding of PD options for credit;
- implement our policy on accountability which outlines positions on assessment, testing and professionalism.

For further information contact Kevin Foley, President, or Edward Hancock, Executive Director.

Presentation by Dr. Lynda Younghusband

There was a presentation at Joint Council by Dr. Lynda Younghusband on her thesis, "High School Teachers' Perspectives on Their Working Environment in Newfoundland: A Grounded Theory Study". The purpose of this study was to explore high school teachers' work experience, particularly as it relates to stress. The study emphasized the importance of administrative and collegial support, the importance of effective communication, the necessity of adequate resources and professional development, and the need to recognize the excessive workload and the associated stress that teachers are feeling. The results of the study provide new insights into the serious problem of teacher stress in this province and the repercussions on their personal and professional lives.

Kevin Foley, President of the NLTA, also made a presentation and press statement to Joint Council concerning the results of Dr. Younghusband's research. The media and several invited guests were also in attendance for the presentation.

For further information contact Kevin Foley, President, or Edward Hancock, Executive Director.

Opening Proposals

A presentation was made to Joint Council by Lloyd Hobbs, Assistant Executive Director and Chief Negotiator, and Perry Downey, Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division, on the contents of the opening proposals for provincial contract negotiations. The key priorities for this round of negotiations were reviewed and the presentation included an overview of proposed changes from NLTA as well as the employer's proposals.

Branch Presidents were provided with copies of the opening proposals for every teacher in their branch and were asked to organize a branch meeting within two weeks of the Joint Council meeting to give a summary of the NLTA opening proposals and a summary of the government/school board opening proposals to all teachers.

For further information contact Kevin Foley, President, or Lloyd Hobbs, Assistant Executive Director.

NLTA Policy Changes

A number of changes in policy statements since the 2005 Biennial General Meeting were approved by Joint Council. These policies provide direction for continuity of decisions and guidance to those who take positions on behalf of the Association. The amended policies include: communications, publications, printing, public relations, Education Week, grievance and arbitration cases, and gender identity and sexual orientation.

For further information contact Kevin Foley, President, or Edward Hancock, Executive Director.

Review of Branch Structure and Operations

Last year the Membership Benefits and Services Committee sought input, via a questionnaire, from branch presidents and branch executive members on issues relating to branch operations including the efficiency and practicality of the current branch structure and boundaries, involvement and accountability at the branch level and responsibilities of branch presidents and executives.

During the Joint Council meeting small group sessions were held with branch presidents to discuss the feedback from the questionnaire and the recommendations from the Membership Benefits and Services Committee.

For further information contact Kevin Foley, President, or Edward Hancock, Executive Director.

Joint Council Discussion Topics

The following topics were reviewed by Joint Council or discussed during the "Branch President Topics" section of the agenda: allowances for travel to board inservice sessions; government response to library conditions; opening and closing dates of school; KinderStart; violence in the classroom; students with exceptionalities; dress code draft policy from Eastern School District; school board-teacher liaison committees; teacher duties outside regular school day; new primary and elementary report card in Eastern District; lack of appropriate preparation time; lack of technology resources; physical education teaching loads; internal/external review of the NLTA; use of teacher professional development days; allocation of student assistant hours; and membership discontent.

For further information contact Kevin Foley, President.

Other Business

Joint Council recommended to Executive that the NLTA commission a study on the incidence and impact of school violence and teacher abuse in the delivery of K-12 education in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

For further information contact Kevin Foley, President, or Edward Hancock, Executive Director.

Next Meeting

The next regular meeting of Provincial Executive is scheduled for **January 27-28** in St. John's.

For further information contact Kevin Foley, President, or Edward Hancock, Executive Director.